

 Meetings

Realty USA accepting applications

Realty USA is now accepting applications for its 12th annual scholarship program for area high school seniors. The scholarship is open to seniors in Erie, Niagara, Orleans, Chautauqua and Cattaraugus counties who are pursuing a four-year college degree. Entrants must complete an application and write a short essay or poem on one of four given topics, have a high school cumulative average of 85 or above for grades 9-12, and provide acceptance and proof of enrollment in an accredited four-year college. Application packets are available through the Guidance Department at area high schools and online at the Web site www.realtyusa.com/about.asp. All completed applications must be postmarked by March 15. For more information, call 689-8182, ext. 207.

Salesperson qualifying course now available

Citing a desire to meet the needs of real estate professionals, the Buffalo Niagara Association of Realtors will offer the 45-hour salespersons' qualifying course in four separate 2007 sessions — February, May, August and October. The course will be held at the BNAR, 100 Sylvan Parkway, in Amherst, starting Feb. 5. Applicants for a real estate salesperson license must successfully complete the 45-hour qualifying course with a passing grade of 70 percent on the final exam before they can sit for the state exam prior to licensure. The cost of the course is \$240 per person. To register or for more information, call 636-9000, or visit the BNAR Web site at www.bnar.org.

HOME offers three scholarships

Housing Opportunities Made Equal will award a total of \$3,500 in scholarships to three high school seniors. Scholarship applications are due by Feb. 26. For an application form, call 854-1400, ext. 21, or visit the Web site at www.homeny.org.

NOCO to enter gas, electric markets

NOCO Energy Corp., the largest fuels distributor in Western New York, announced that the company has been approved and authorized by the New York State Public Service Commission to sell natural gas and electricity to homeowners across the region.

Because NOCO will provide consumers with guaranteed savings off prices charged by the traditional utilities, NOCO officials are anticipating thousands of customers throughout Western New York to enroll in these new programs. To augment the company's existing Residential Customer Service Group, NOCO has hired eight new employees to handle the growing volume of new customers.

"The fact that consumers now have the power to select natural gas and electricity suppliers other than their local utilities creates a great opportunity for our company to enter into new business areas in order to expand our operations and remain a strong local company," James D. Newman, President, NOCO Energy Corp. said. "With the deregulation of natural gas and electricity marketplaces, more competition will lead to both more choices and lower prices for electricity and natural gas customers throughout the region."

As part of the company's entrance into the

electricity and natural gas marketplaces, NOCO is offering an array of aggressive incentives to entice new customers.

Homeowners who select NOCO to supply their electricity are guaranteed to save up to 10 percent on their electricity supply. Natural gas customers can choose from a variety of programs specifically designed to offer savings off utility rates. In addition, because NOCO is not a regulated utility, natural gas and electric customers are exempt from sales tax on the delivery portion of their bills and from gross receipts tax on the commodity portion of their bills. Though traditional utility companies are required to charge all residential customers the same rates, NOCO natural gas and electric customers can save even more through other money-saving programs.

"The ability to compete in the natural gas and electricity markets affords NOCO an incredible growth opportunity in areas that closely complement the company's traditional energy offerings" said Michael F. Newman, Executive Vice President, NOCO Energy, Corp. "To promote these exciting new offers, we are utilizing our strong network of NOCO

Express Stores to enroll residential energy customers."

Enrolling in NOCO's Natural Gas and Electric programs is fast and easy. The programs include no monthly service fees and require no security deposit. Enrollment Forms are available at all NOCO Express Stores and on NOCO's Web site at www.noco.com. Customers also can enroll by calling a NOCO Customer Service Specialist at 800-662-6776.



NOCO owns and operates a diverse group of businesses primarily focused on the sale and distribution of energy and petroleum products. For over 70-years, NOCO has provided the Western New York community with the highest quality heating fuels together with unmatched customer service. NOCO distributes a full line of commercial fuels, industrial lubricants, bio-products, home energy fuel, and heating and cooling systems. The company also operates more than 30 NOCO Express service stations and convenience stores throughout Western New York.

NOCO delivers the promise of energy to all of Western New York.

ComDoc becomes employee-owned

Amherst based ComDoc, Inc., an independent copier, printer and fax dealer, recently completed a transaction that makes the company 100 percent employee-owned.

Larry Cohen, Marketplace of Western New York president, said the step furthers the culture ownership that drives its success as one of the leading independent providers of document management solutions.

"This is an exciting, positive step forward in the continued growth of ComDoc," Cohen said. "Our corporate vision is to be a 'Great Place to Work and a Great Place to be a Customer.' With this transaction, we move closer toward that vision becoming a reality for more of our people and more of our customers."

ComDoc's name, coined in 1981, was derived from the words communication and documentation.

"ComDoc's 'culture of ownership' is a feeling we share of common purpose, teamwork and camaraderie," Cohen said. "Our ESOP is a key part of our culture, and we are excited about the continued opportunity to control our own destiny as an independent, employee-owned firm."

ComDoc is an employee-owned company with more than 500 partners and sales in excess of \$100 million. With 12 sales offices, the firm provides document solutions that include consulting, designing, and distribution strategies to help customers maximize the information for their businesses.

ComDoc, Inc. is located at 10 J.J. Audubon Parkway, Amherst. For more information, call 689-0202 or visit web-buf@comdocinc.com.

Business Hall of Fame nominations sought

The New York Business Hall Of Fame is accepting nominations through Jan. 31 for the "Class Of 2006" induction ceremony.

Nominations are now being taken online, via the New York Business Hall Of Fame Web site www.newyorkbhof.com for nine different categories including business leaders from small, medium and large size businesses and companies of various sizes as well.

Nominations are also accepted for corporate volunteers and for business graduate students. One student will be picked to receive a scholarship award. The cost is \$35 per nomination and the winners will be chosen by an awards committee that has been established by the New York Business Hall Of Fame.

The New York Business Hall Of Fame showcases successful companies and business leaders through business networking and industry events that are held throughout the state.

The organization partners with private and public organizations, associations and corporations to promote economic development and new ideas in the marketplace. For more information, visit www.newyorkbhof.com.

Chamber reshapes for 2007

The Amherst Chamber of Commerce recently installed the organization's 2007 officers and new board members. Dennis Elsenbeck, vice president of Business Services of National Grid, was installed as the new chairman of the board of directors.

Other officers installed were Rich Cahlstadt, HSBC Bank, secretary; Mark Gaulin, Personal computers, Inc., first vice chair; David Flynn, Phillips Lytle, LLP, second vice chair; William McGowan, AccuMed Technologies, Inc., treasurer; Sharon Lochoki, KeyBank, N.A., small business council chair; and Stuart Haney, Robson Roes, advocacy council chair.

The chamber also announced the following individuals have been elected to the board of directors: Kerry Atkinson, Buffalo Bills; Matthew Enstice, Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus; Victor L. "Pete" Peterson, MJ Peterson Real Estate; Malini Sridhar, CompSys Technologies; Donald Hahn, Hahn & Associates; and Terry Elbersen, Schunk Wilson & Company. The officers and board members were sworn in by New York State Senator Mary Lou Rath.

"I want to thank my predecessor, Paul Nesper, for his leadership as chairman over the past

two years," Elsenbeck said. "This is an exciting time to be in a leadership position at the chamber as we undertake the implementation of our Sustainable Amherst program in collaboration with our community and civic partners."

The chamber also presented its 2006 Volunteer of the Year Award to the various officials that served on the Amherst Chamber of Commerce Town Budget Review Committee. Among those who served on the committee who were honored include: Ian Redpath, Ph.D, associate professor and accounting department chairman at Canisius college, who served as committee chairman; John Oehler, partner, Lumsden and McCormick; Peter O'Brien, a former partner Peat Marwick; Joseph Wild, CEO, Manning and Napier; and Christopher Fiorello, managing partner, Employee Benefits Group.

"The chamber is entering an unprecedented period for our organization as the community, business and political climate has changed dramatically," Colleen DePirro, president and CEO of the chamber, said. "We believe that Sustainable Amherst has the potential to mutually align the interests of these segments of our community in moving forward."

 Business News

BNI-Northern Networkers Chapter will hold its weekly business network meeting at 7 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 30 at the Screening Room, 3131 Sheridan Drive, Amherst. For information, contact Garry Krause 695-9382. Visitors are welcome. All meetings are held at 7 a.m. and will meet on Feb. 6, 13 and 20.

Kenney Shelton Liptak Nowak LLP recently appointed Eric C. Genau of Amherst to the Ad Council of Buffalo's Board of Directors and will also serve as the Ad Council's legal counsel. A private, not-for-profit organization that was founded in 1991, the Ad Council of Buffalo helps Western New York nonprofit organizations produce and disseminate critical messages by linking organizations with volunteers from the marketing, advertising and public relations fields.